

**SUMMARY OF THE  
ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 05, 2001**

The Accrediting Authority Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met on Wednesday, September 05, 2001 at 2:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) via teleconference. The meeting was led by Chairperson Louis Johnson of the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Quality Assurance Plan (QAP) Document for NELAP.

**INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Johnson welcomed the committee members to the teleconference. Attendance was recorded as each committee member introduced him/herself. Mr. Johnson introduced Anteon Corporation as the new scribe service that is replacing RTI.

**QAP DOCUMENT FOR NELAP**

Mr. Johnson requested that the members refer to the QAP document he had sent out prior to the meeting. Discussion began by addressing the question of whether anything should be added to the Table of Contents. It was suggested that Section 7 be classified as “Complaints/Disputes” as opposed to “Complaints”. A question was asked regarding Section 2 on Quality Assurance, namely does it include Quality Assurance (QA) oversight? Who is responsible for QA? After some discussion it was determined that both Accrediting Authority Review Board (AARB) and EPA’s Quality Control have oversight, although EPA’s membership is non-voting.

Under Section 1.1, NELAP Organization and Mission, it was suggested to rephrase the second sentence of the second paragraph to read “NELAP grants authority to governmental organizations at the territorial, state and federal levels to accredit labs, according to NELAC Standards”. Mr. Johnson will work on rewording section and send out to members prior to next meeting.

Also under 1.1, it was suggested to revise the Mission Statement by inserting the line “The purpose of the organization is to foster the generation of environmental laboratory data of known and documented quality in a cost-effective manner through the development of nationally accepted standards for environmental laboratory accreditation.” as found in Program Policy and Structure of the Standards Section 1.1.1 Overview of NELAC. It was also suggested to add “The purpose of this oversight is to ensure a high degree of standardization and coordination among the different accrediting authorities.” from 1.5.1.1 of the above referenced section. Mr. Johnson will work on rewording and send to members.

Under Section 1.2.1, Administrator, the term “Administrator” will be changed to “Director”. Wording from Article V, Section 4 of the Bylaws regarding the responsibilities of the Director will

be added.

Under Section 1.2.5, Quality Assurance Coordinator, it was suggested that as there is no Quality Assurance Coordinator for the NELAP Quality Assurance Program, the contents of this section be put into Section 2, Quality Assurance Organization.

The question was asked if the committee felt it was necessary to go to the level of definition as is found in Section 1.3, Personnel Qualifications. After some discussion, it was agreed that it was necessary. Mr. Johnson will rewrite this section.

Mr. Johnson will reword Section 1.4, Position/Job Description.

Under Section 1.5, Training, it was recommended to keep wording non-gender specific. Mr. Johnson will send this section to EPA Region 6 QA officer Don Johnson for his review and input.

Under Section 2, a new paragraph 2.5 will be added which will cover the AARB. A paragraph for Corrective Actions also needs to be added. Mr. Johnson will work on these.

In review of Section 3.0, Documents and Records, discussion resulted in consensus that retention time shall be same as NELAC's, 5-10 years. Mr. Johnson will check the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for guidelines on retention time. Some suggestions for specific documents to be kept and listed under "Records kept include but not limited to..." are: Applications, Evaluations, Training Records, Conflict Resolution, General Correspondence, Annual Reports, Meeting Notes, Database, Quality Documents, Official Certifications, NELAC Standards, and each revision of an SOP. It was mentioned that in 6.3.3.1.1 of NELAC Standards, it states that records are kept 10 years.

Under Section 4.0, Standard Operating Procedures, it was suggested that the first line be revised to read "...EPA and NELAP designated personnel..."

Pertaining to Section 5, Computer Hardware and Software, the question was raised regarding who is responsible for the database. Mr. Johnson will ascertain if NELAP is the oversight of the National Database.

It was suggested to delete the second paragraph of Section 6. Mr. Johnson will research whether the information contained therein is accurate and/or necessary.

Under Section 7, Complaints, discussion continued regarding differences between complaints and disputes. It was suggested to add a paragraph to this section on how complaints are handled.

Mr. Johnson will add members' comments and make further revisions to the document and will send out to members in one week, so this can be revisited at next meeting.

## **FUTURE TELECONFERENCES**

Mr. Johnson suggested that as he would be unavailable for the September 19 meeting, it be canceled. Therefore, the next teleconference is scheduled for October 3, 2001, at 2:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). This meeting will cover, in addition to the revised QAP Document, the first two sections of the Standard Operating Procedures which are AA Assessor and Team Selection.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45, EDT.

**ACTION ITEMS**  
**ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 05, 2001**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date to be Completed</b>
	Mr. Johnson to contact Don Johnson from EPA Region 6 for his review and input of the QAP Document.	ASAP
	Mr. Johnson to add members' comments and make revisions to QAP document and will send out to members so this can be revisited at next meeting	09/14/01

**PARTICIPANTS**  
**ACCREDITING AUTHORITY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**SEPTEMBER 05, 2001**

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